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**Restructuring Work for Family:  
How Dual-Earner Couples with Children Manage**

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### Abstract

This study developed and tested a model of the conditions under which dual-earner, professional couples with children living at home, restructure their work in order to accommodate family needs. Eighty-seven such couples where at least one spouse was a professional in advertising, law, or accounting participated in the study. The results supported a symmetric model of family functioning. When women were restructuring their work, so were their husbands. Furthermore, both men and women's restructuring was systematically related to their own work and family conditions as well as well as their spouses' work and family conditions. These results emphasize the importance of studying dual-earner couples as a family system.

The movement of large numbers of middle class women into the work force has had a major impact on family life. The purpose of this study is to begin to investigate whether this movement of women into the work force is also causing a change in the structure of work. This study develops and tests a model of the conditions under which dual-earner, professional couples with children restructure their work in order to accommodate needs of children and spouse. There are two assumptions underlying the model: 1) that the family is a system; and 2) that work and family are intersecting systems.

The assumption that the family is a system is a basic tenet of family therapists. Since the behavior of one family member affects the behaviors of other family members, family therapists treat the whole family together (Olson, Russell & Sprenkle, 1980). The assumption that work and family are intersecting systems is based on Kanter's (1977) argument that it is inappropriate to treat work and family as "separate worlds." She pointed out that work demands affect family life and the family conditions affect work performance.

The model studied here incorporates both of these assumptions. It proposes relationships between work and family behavior for husband and wife separately (intra-spouse), as well as between husband and wife's behavior (inter-spouse).

We summarized the theoretical literature characterizing couples in terms of each spouse's enactment of work and family roles in Yogeve and Brett (1985). In that empirical study, we found that the work and family role behavior of one spouse was systematically related to the work and family role behavior of the other. In particular, dual-earner couples were

most likely to exhibit symmetry in terms of their psychological involvement in work and family. However, role behavior was more complex. Husbands, regardless of their psychological involvement with the family, absorbed family responsibilities when the wife's job involvement resulted in long hours at work, travel and overtime.

Research that looks at the effect of both spouses' work on the family has only begun to be published recently. For example, Nock and Kingston (1984) found that parents of young children stagger their work hours so that one parent is at home with the children more than parents of older children. Voydanoff and Donnelly (1983) found that wives were less satisfied with their marriages and their families when their husband's employment was unstable. Ladweig and McGee (1986) found that when women were committed to work their husbands were less satisfied with their marriages, but there was no converse effect on wives' satisfaction with marriage when husbands were highly committed to work.

This research moves beyond our 1985 study in that it proposes and tests a model of the conditions under which dual-earner couples restructure work in order to accommodate family. Taking off from the 1985 findings and consistent with our view of the family as a system, the model provides for direct and indirect influences between each spouse's work, their joint and individual family conditions and changes made in work behavior in order to accommodate family.

### Model

#### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in the research is broadly defined as work

restructuring. More precisely, we are interested in deviations from the traditional, normative work behaviors (means) that are believed to be necessary for professional success (ends) but, that are in conflict with family life. While there are some objective indicators of performance for professionals, e. g., winning a court case, finding a tax loophole for a client, designing an effective advertising campaign, indicators of the quality of the everyday servicing of clients are seldom objective and frequently emphasize appearance. Examples are numerous. Take for instance the law firm we studied where a buffet lunch was served every Saturday. The norm in this firm was to be in the office Saturday morning and be seen at lunch not by the clients, but by the senior partners. In the advertising agencies we studied, managers with out-of-town accounts had to be able to travel to the clients' offices on very short notice. The creative people in advertising often worked evenings and weekends to pull together campaigns - again on short notice. When one of their ideas got accepted, they often traveled to California for one or more weeks to participate in the "shooting" of the ad. The accounting professionals we studied experienced a great deal of evening and weekend work during particular periods of the year. While they could plan for this period of heavy overtime, it nonetheless placed heavy burdens on their spouses.

While professionals can do little restructuring of the objective indicators of performance - and we doubt they would want to - they may be able and willing to restructure those that are subjective and may have more to do with appearance than substance, e. g., overtime, weekends, travel. When the problems of constantly rearranging family routines (e.g., husband must stay late at work the night he normally picks up children at daycare)

become overwhelming or the quality of life for the family or for the focal parent becomes an issue (e.g., misses seeing the children because of travel), then we expect professionals to restructure work.

Each arrow in Figure 1 represents an hypothesis. Arrows a and b indicate a reciprocal relationship between the degree to which husband and wife each restructure their own work. This reciprocity implies that there is a systematic relationship between husband and wife's restructuring. An asymmetric pattern suggests that the more she does the less he does and would be demonstrated by negative coefficients for arrows a and b. A symmetric pattern implies that either both restructure or both do not and would be indicated by positive coefficients for arrows a and b.

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Insert Figure 1 here

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In our previous work on dual-earner couples (Yogev, and Brett, 1985), we found that in terms of the psychological constructs of work and family involvement, symmetry was the dominant pattern for dual-career couples. In this study, since the dependent variable is a behavior, we expected a negative reciprocal relationship between his work role restructuring and hers, i.e., the less his role is restructured, the more her role is restructured (arrow a in Figure 1). We also considered that there might be only a slight reciprocal impact of her role restructuring on his role restructuring (arrow b) because social norms and sex role stereotypes are such that even in dual-career families, the wives take the greatest

responsibility for the children.

### Independent Variables

Figure 1 shows two types of direct effects on deviations from work norms: occupational variables and family variables, for both spouses. Figure 1 assumes that environmental and psychological factors in the wife's work and family domains affect her work restructuring directly and only indirectly affect her husband's behavior. Likewise factors in the husband's work and family domains are expected to affect his work restructuring directly and affect her behavior only indirectly.

Organizational culture. Organizational culture is a new label for a concept that has been discussed in the organizational behavior literature for some time. Culture, according to Schwartz and Davis (1981:33) is a "pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization's members." They continue: "These beliefs and expectations powerfully shape the behavior of individuals and groups in organizations." Wilensky (1961: 521-2) points out: "occupational cultures (rooted in common tasks, work schedules, job training, and career patterns) are sometimes better predictors of behavior than both social class and pre-job experience."

While there has been much discussion in the popular press (Peters and Waterman, 1982) about the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness, we are interested in corporate culture as it was originally conceptualized - as norms and expectations that influence the behavior of individuals. We propose that organizational cultures differ with respect to tolerance for alternative work behaviors. For example, the culture at New York Telephone Company was flexible enough that a dual career couple each of whom is a product marketing manager is



dividing their work week between a specially equipped home office in Westchester county and their corporate office in downtown Manhattan. The spouse working at home also cares for the couples' 10 month old child (The New York Times, 6/3/82, p.21-22).

We hypothesize that there will be more frequent restructuring in organizations that emphasize participation and attention to individual needs, rather than competition, power or conformity.

Occupation. We propose that occupations differ in terms of behavioral norms regarding hours, travel and overtime, ease in moving from full to part-time work, ease in working at home, etc. For example, many people on the creative side of advertising free-lance. They set their own hours. But those who work for an agency do not have much flexibility. They work in pairs and teams and spend a great deal of time at the office in meetings. In the agencies where we interviewed, a premium was placed on being around and available when higher level managers could meet. Interestingly, it appears to be the law firms where the task itself provides built-in flexibility. Lawyers who are in the midst of litigation, of course must adhere to the judges' schedule, but much legal work is done individually, either preparing briefs or motions or talking with the client on the telephone. It is also possible to vary one's client load, since lawyers bill on a hourly basis.

There are also differences between occupations in expectations about travel and relocation. We learned that in the very large accounting firms, professionals can choose their area of work based on their willingness to travel. For example, accounting consultants typically travel a lot, but accountants specializing in public utility audits do not. Unfortunately,

the obvious solution of switching to a new field within accounting, when, for example the travel interferes with family life, is not easily done, since accumulated expertise makes it difficult to change into another area of accounting.

Economic environment. We suspect that an employer who is having difficulty filling certain jobs without changing the internal salary structure of the firm and perhaps jeopardizing the competitiveness of the product or service due to labor costs, may be willing to restructure the job in order to fill it. We know, for example, that Continental Bank of Illinois provides computer programmers with equipment so that they can do their work at home. At the time Continental developed this alternative work structure, demand for computer programmers in the Chicago area was extremely high; turnover was also extremely high. Continental reports substantial reduction in turnover, with no loss in productivity (Personal communication to the authors).

We also found an advertising agency agreeing to allow a key creative employee to work "part-time" because she wanted to be at home with her children. Creative talent is a scarce resource in advertising and this young woman's ideas had been very successful for the client, who wanted to keep her working on its account, even if part-time. A female account executive at the same firm was denied the opportunity to continue working part-time after her baby was born. While no reason was given, we suspect that account executives were not such scarce resources in that firm.

Work Involvement. Work involvement refers to "the internalization of values about the goodness of work or the importance of work in the worth of the person (Lodahl and Kejner, 1965). Its operationalization by Lodahl and

Kajner (1965) is widely used in the organizational behavior research literature on job design and careers. Its colloquial meaning is probably best captured by one of Lodahl and Kajner's items: "I live, eat and breathe my job."

It is too facile and probably wrong to hypothesize that the spouse with the lowest work involvement will exhibit the greatest work role restructuring. We suspect it is the pattern of work and family role involvement across both working spouses that predicts work role restructuring. For example, we predict a high degree of work role restructuring when both spouses are highly involved in their jobs and in their family life.

Career Stage. Hall and Nougaim (1968) conclude that a career can generally be divided into three distinct stages: establishment, maintenance and decline. Establishment is the most demanding stage, as the employee is both trying to gain the skills needed to perform his/her job well and demonstrate that he/she has potential for greater responsibility. In a traditional career pattern, performance during the establishment phase dictates how high an individual will reach in his/her organization. In an alternative career, the establishment stage may be prolonged. We expect the greatest level of conflict between work and family will occur during the establishment stage, since it coincides with the period when people are also establishing families. As such, it may be easier to restructure work during the maintenance stage of a career.

Extra Work Activities. In the firms where we interviewed, professionals were expected to work extra hours when the work load demanded beyond the regular 9 to 5 or 8 to 6 schedule. These extra hours included

weekends, evenings and early mornings, as well as travel. These extra work activities should be negatively related to restructuring. That is, those who report that they are structuring their work around family requirements should actually be doing less extra-hour activities at work than those who report they are not restructuring. If this pattern is not verified in the data, then while some may think that they are restructuring their work and making arrangements for family, they are doing so without any actual impact on work.

Family stage. Research on family has determined that family dynamics change with the changing status of the family. Families with infants confront different issues than do those with school age children or with adolescents. Characterizing the family by the age of the youngest or oldest child, as is commonly done in the family literature, ignores the fact that families often have more than one child and the children are different ages, forcing the family to confront a variety of issues simultaneously. Nevertheless, we included family stage in the model, recognizing that it is possible that couples with young children regardless of the ages of other children, will have more intense family needs that interfere with work.

Family Involvement. We conceptualize family involvement as the degree to which a person is identified, psychologically with family roles, the importance of family roles to the person's self-image and self-concept, and the individual's commitment to family roles. Like work involvement, it is probably reflected in the inability to segment family problems from work time, and motivation to perform family role effectively. We expect that higher levels of family involvement would be related to greater degrees of

work restructuring.

Family Work. We anticipate that professionals who report restructuring their work in order to attend to family activities will also be spending more time on family work, e.g., housework and child care, than others.

Help with Housework and Child Care. Professionals may not have a great deal of time available to devote to family, but their time consuming work, does provide significant financial resources to pay for help with housework and child care. We propose that couples who have help will restructure less than those who do not have such help.

Coping. Following Bandura (1977), we define coping as an indicator of self-efficacy or personal mastery of the work-family situation.

Professionals who are having no difficulty managing the demands of work and family are likely to feel self-efficacious. If work restructuring is used as an active coping mechanism to reduce conflict between work and family, there should be a positive relationship between restructuring and coping. On the other hand, if work restructuring is used only as a stop-gap measure to manage the conflict between work and family, but does not reduce it, there should be a negative relationship between restructuring and coping.

## Method

### Design

Data for this study were collected by identical questionnaires mailed to couples. Prior to the questionnaire study, we interviewed professionals at different career stages in 5 Chicago area firms: 2 law firms, 2

advertising agencies, and an accounting firm. The purpose of the interviews was to help us understand how work and family demands overlapped in these occupations and help us design the questionnaire.

### Sample

The target population of this study was dual-earner couples, with children living in the home, at least one of whom was employed by an advertising agency, a law firm or an accounting firm. We selected these three occupations because we wanted to study professionals whose jobs potentially required that they work nights, weekends, early mornings, travel.

We initially contacted law and accounting firms and advertising agencies in the Chicago area. Firms were able to generate lists of married professionals, but they did not know if employees' spouses were working or if they had children. We mailed questionnaires to 386 couples. Our response rate was 153 couples or 40 percent; 10 returned the questionnaires without completing them. However, only 46 of these couples met the criteria for this study, i.e., spouse working and children. This experience proved to us that identifying members of this study's population through firms was an inefficient way to identify a sample.

We then began an multi-pronged approach to identify potential members of our target population. We used a waterfall technique, asking people we knew for the names of others. This yielded a response rate of 35 percent and 9 couples. We used the Kellogg Graduate School of Management's alumni list. The list indicated occupation, but not marital status, spouse's employment or whether there were any children living in the home. We sent letters requesting participation, if eligible, to 138 alumni. Twenty three

returned postcards indicating that they were eligible and would participate. Seventeen returned completed questionnaires, but two were no longer eligible. Finally, we were given the mailing list of a group "lawyers for alternative work schedules". Again we did not know if these lawyers were married, if their spouses were working or if there were children. We sent 285 letters. Eleven letters were returned "addressee unknown." Eighty seven eligible lawyers returned postcards. Questionnaires were subsequently received from 39 of these couples. Incomplete data reduced the usable sample from this source to 35.

The sample for this study was 27 couples. Table 1 presents their demographic characteristics. The major differences between men and women had to do with work. The women had been working as professionals, on average, three years less than the men and described themselves as "getting established" in their careers as opposed to the men who described themselves as "advancing." They were working on average one hour less per day than the men but were earning substantially less than the men. This distinction between men and women on work hours disappeared when the women working part-time (35) are removed from the sample, but the income differential does not. Full-time women were working 8.74 hours per week and earning on average \$38,000 per year.

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Insert Table 1 here

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The sample selection procedures and response rate, make it extremely difficult to state just exactly of what population this is a sample. It is our experience that there are not a lot of dual-earner couples with

children living at home at least one of whom is a lawyer, accountant or working in an advertising agency. Or, that couples who do fit this population are too busy or otherwise unwilling to complete a rather lengthy questionnaire. In our previous research on couples, our response rate has been about 60 percent (Yogev and Brett, 1985). In the lawyer sample where we knew the people to whom we had sent the questionnaire were eligible, the response rate was about 44 percent. In the Kellogg sample, in contrast, the response rate was 73 percent. In the other samples the response rate reflected both the fact that some couples were not eligible and others were unwilling to participate. As a result of unknown sampling bias, the results of this study must be carefully interpreted.

### Measures

Work restructuring. Restructuring was measured with an instrument developed particularly for this research. Subjects were asked seven open-ended questions about how they handled work/family conflicts on a regular basis:

1. Are your hours of arrival and departure dictated by family schedule?
2. Do you structure your hours at work in order to be at home at certain times?
3. Do you limit the number of evenings per week that you work in the office?
4. Do you limit your weekend work at the office?
5. Do you limit your travel or structure it?
6. Do you make special, one-time arrangements at work in order to attend a child's activity?



7. Do you make any special, one-time arrangements at work in order to accommodate your spouse's needs?

Answers were coded first for content, e.g. "Yes, I leave at 5 pm to pick up children at day care;" "Yes, I leave to go work-out;" "I avoid weekends in the office by staying late evenings;" etc. The resulting 95 item content code was then weighted in the following manner. Ten points were given for each answer that indicated less work was done because of children's needs, for example, "I don't work on weekends;" "I don't travel." Eight points were given when the work schedule was adjusted on a regular basis, to coordinate with the spouse's schedule. For example, "I pick the children up at day care every Monday and Wednesday because my husband has late meeting those afternoons." Six points were given for rearranging work, so that all could be done, just at a typical times. For example, "I work evenings or go in early so as not to work weekends." Four points were given for restructuring work for special events, like attending a parent-teachers conference. Three points were given for a "yes" to one of the seven questions that was not explained. No points were given for structuring work in order to have personal leisure time. Weighted answers were summed across multiple responses to the seven questions and divided by the number of relevant questions. The number of times special arrangements had been made during the prior six months was also taken into account. One to 3 special arrangements received 1 point, more than 3 special arrangements received 2 points. Subjects who were working part-time around a child's schedule received 15 points. There were 35 women in this category.

Organizational culture. Organizational culture was measured with 24

items taken from Level V: Organizational Culture Inventory. This inventory focuses on behavioral and interpersonal styles that are expected and rewarded by the organization. It contains 120 items which produce 12 first level factors and 3 second level factors (Cooke and Rousseau, 1987). Each item describes a behavior or personal style that might be expected of members in an organization. Respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which each behavior helps people fit in and meet expectations in their organization. Robert Cooke, who developed this inventory, ran correlations between items and their respective factors to aid us in selecting a subset of items to use in our questionnaire. We selected 20 items. Maximum likelihood factor analyses, using as a sample — employed individuals who responded to the first mailing indicated the best fit was a four factor solution. These factors were 1) humanistic, helpful - indicating an organization oriented toward people; 2) competitive - indicating a culture oriented toward building power and outperforming peers; 3) self-expression - indicating a culture oriented toward individual achievement; and 4) conformity - indicating a culture where no one takes chances and confrontation is avoided. Coefficient alpha's for the scales in the development sample were: humanistic, helpful .88; competitive, .77; self-expression, .81; conformity, .75. Since we had no hypothesis regarding the self-expression dimension that was identified in the factor analysis, it was dropped from further consideration. Means, standard deviations and coefficient alphas from the sample used in this study are presented in Table 2.

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Insert Table 2 here

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Occupation. While one member of each couple was employed in law, accounting or advertising, the other was not. We coded occupations into the following categories: 1) law; 2) accounting; 3) managerial, e.g., account managers in advertising and other managerial functions; 4) other professional, e.g., doctors, therapists, college professors; 5) all other, including white collar, technical; clerical; sales. Table 3 shows the proportions of men and women in each occupation and their average restructuring scores.

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Insert: Table 3 here

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Labor economic environment. The labor economic environment was measured by three self-report questions: How long would it take: a) to find a new job that pays as well as the current job? b) to find a new job as challenging as the current job? c) to find a new job as interesting as the current job? Answer alternatives were: one month or less; 2 to 3 months; 4 to 6 months; 6 to 12 months; 12 to 18 months; more than 18 months. Answers were summed.

Work involvement. This construct was measured with three items from Hackman and Lawler (1971): a) The most important things that happen to me involve my work. b) I live, eat, and breath my job. c) I am very much personally involved in my work.

Career stage. Career stage was measured by asking subjects to choose among seven statements:

....focusing my ideas about the type of work I really want to do and

that is personally satisfying.

...focusing on developing new skills to deal with new opportunities.

...focusing on getting firmly established in my occupation.

...focusing on advancing in my occupation.

...focusing on maintaining the occupational position I have already achieved, despite competition from others; technological change, etc.

...focusing on letting up; concentrating on factors beyond work, e. g., family friends, activities.

This measure is based on the operationalization of career stage in Hall (1976) and personal communications with him.

Extra work hours. A series of questions was asked about actual hours at work. Three questions that covaried were: When your workload is heavy how many times per month do you stay late at the office? When your workload is normal how many times per month do you stay late at the office? How often do you go into the office in the morning earlier in than your normal arrival time? These items were summed.

Travel. Each respondent was also asked how many nights per year they traveled for business.

Family stage. Family stage was measured based on the age of the youngest child, according to Rodgers (1964). Categories were: 0-12 months; 13 months to 3 years; 3 years, 1 month to 6 years; 6 years, 1 month to 12 years; 12 years, 1 month to 18 years.

Family involvement. Family involvement was measured with an instrument we developed in a previous study (Yogev and Brett, 1985). The questions were originally modeled after Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) job involvement instrument. They focus on two family roles: spouse and parent, for

example: a great satisfaction in my life comes from being a parent; I am very much involved personally with my family member's lives; nothing in life is as important as being a spouse. Response choices were 5 point Likert scales ranging from strongly agree through neutral to strongly disagree.

Family work, hours. Each spouse was asked how many weekday and weekend hours were spent doing family work, including housework, child care and finances.

Family work, tasks. Respondents were asked who did 8 different housework and 12 different child care tasks: wife alone, husband alone, or shared. Each task was given a weight: 3 points for daily tasks such as cooking meals, putting children to bed or for tasks done under time pressure (e. g., getting the children off to school) or for constant tasks (e.g., keeping track of where the children are); 2 points were given for weekly housework tasks (e.g., laundry) or daily, more pleasurable child care tasks such as playing with children, or more general scheduling tasks (e.g., arranging babysitting); 1 point was given to periodic housework tasks like home repairs. Each task done by one spouse only received double weight. Scores were added. The resulting index indicates both the number of tasks done and their relative constancy.

Help with Housework and Child Care. Help with family work was measured by asking whether there was paid help to do the same 8 housework and 12 child care tasks, as well as a set of questions asking what happens when the person who usually does the task cannot do it.

Coping. Coping was measured with four questions asking in the last month...

How often have you felt confident about your ability to handle personal problems?

How often have you felt that you were effectively coping with important changes that were occurring in your life?

How often have you felt things were going your way?

How often have you felt that you were on top of things?

Answer choices included: never, almost never, sometimes, fairly often, very often. These questions were based on a scale developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Merlestein (1983).

### Analysis

The model was tested using two-stage least squares analysis (James and Singh, 1978). This analysis is appropriate for testing models where "two or more variables to be explained by the model are mutually dependent and reciprocal causes of one another." (James and Singh, 1978, p. 1106) The model in Figure 1 is over-identified, that is, there are hypothesized direct causes of her work restructuring that are not hypothesized direct causes of his work restructuring and vice versa, and thus meets the conditions necessary for a two-stage least squares analysis.

The Gocka (1973) technique for mixed-mode variables was used to generate a single coefficient for occupation, a categorical variable. The technique gives each subject in an occupational group that group's mean on the endogenous variable. This translates the categorical group differences into ordinal differences. Following this procedure, the degrees of freedom of the overall F need to be adjusted for N-1 number of groups.

Because this was an exploratory study as well as one testing a model,

bivariate correlations are presented and discussed first. The two-stage least squares analysis was applied to the operationalization of the full model in Figure 1, and did not exclude exogenous variables found to be non significant in the bivariate analysis.

### Results

Table 2 shows that women restructure their work significantly more than men. This is no surprise, as in our sample some women, but no men, were working part-time in order to manage the demands of work and family.

Table 4 shows the bivariate correlations between exogenous and endogenous variables in Figure 1. Men and women's work restructuring were positively related, supporting the symmetric model for dual-earner couples we had found in previous research (Yogev and Brett, 1985). The men doing the most restructuring were employed in occupations in which they had the most control over their hours of work: doctors, therapists, and professors. (See Table 3.) Managers were doing the least restructuring. Men who were restructuring also reported that they were in the early stages of their careers, though they were not necessarily the ones with small children since family stage was not significant. Men who were restructuring reported that they were doing more housework and child care tasks than others, but they were spending no more time doing family work than those who were doing less restructuring, perhaps because they were sharing these tasks with paid help.

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Insert Table 4

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The single strongest correlate of men's work restructuring was coping. The ones who were restructuring most reported that they were coping poorly with their personal situation.

The correlations at the bottom of Table 4 show that husbands of women lawyers (see also Table 3), of women in the early stages of their careers, and of women who themselves were not coping particularly well with their personal situations were doing more work restructuring than others. Three other significant correlations are more difficult to interpret, but all suggest that his work restructuring was not in response to her occupational demands. For example, husbands of women who worked in high conformity cultures restructured work less than husbands of women who worked in less strict cultures. Husbands of women whose jobs were difficult to replace, restructured work less than husbands of women who believed they could replace their jobs with ease. Husbands of women who worked extra hours restructured less than husbands of women who limited their extra work hours.

Women who restructured their work the most had a young child, were doing a large proportion of family tasks, and spending significant time on them. These women were most likely to be lawyers or professionals and least likely to be managers. They were limiting their extra work hours and they were less psychologically involved with work than women who were doing less restructuring. The only one of their husbands' variables that correlated significantly with their restructuring was his labor economic environment. When he believed it would be difficult to find another job, she did more restructuring of her work.



Figure 2 shows the significant results of the two-stage least squares analysis of the model of his and her work restructuring shown in Figure 1. The adjusted r squares from the first-stage ordinary least squares analysis were .27 for his restructuring and .23 for her restructuring. These results indicate that significant proportions of the variance in his and her restructuring were associated with the exogenous variables.

The second-stage adjusted r squares were .20 for his restructuring and .25 for her restructuring. While the overall results were significant, neither of the reciprocal paths (arrows a and b) was significant at conventional levels. The positive path from her restructuring to his indicates a trend of symmetric restructuring that was significant in the bivariate correlation.

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Insert Figure 2 here

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The primary factor accounting for which women were doing the most restructuring was occupation. As previously discussed, the women lawyers in this sample were restructuring work the most and the women managers, the least. Their work restructuring, which in some instances, meant that they were working part-time, was reflected in the fact that they were not working evenings, weekends, or going in to work early in the morning. These women tended to do more housework and child care tasks and spent more hours doing them. Oddly, they were less psychologically involved with their families than women doing less restructuring.

Men who were restructuring most were most likely to be professionals or lawyers and least likely to be managers. Their families had the most paid household help, but they still were not coping well with their personal situations. These men's wives were psychologically involved with work, even though they (the wives) were not putting in extra hours at the office during the evenings, on weekends, or early mornings. Wives of men who were restructuring were also working in low conformity organizations.

#### Discussion

Predicting behavior is usually difficult and this study is no exception. The results supported the assumption that there are relationships between each spouse's work and family conditions and work restructuring. There were significant cross-over relationships particularly between characteristics of her situation and his work restructuring. But, there was no significant direct reciprocal relationship between his and her restructuring.

The bivariate correlations provided greater support for the hypotheses than the two-stage least squares regression, to some extent because of multicollinearity among the exogenous variables. The only causes that seemed to have no interpretable impact on work restructuring for husband or wife were characteristics of organizational culture. All the other predictors in Figure 1 had significant bivariate relationships with either his or her work role restructuring. These results are encouraging, for even though we were unable to specify the exact relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables, we were able to identify theoretically and verify empirically variables that were related to work role restructuring.

Some of the findings deserve particular attention. That women restructured their work significantly more than men, and that those who did, typically had young children, did a large proportion of family tasks, and spent much time on these tasks, should come as no surprise. In our sample, some women, but no men, were working part-time. Furthermore, in spite of all the progress women have made at work, in the family, they still take primary responsibility for the housework and child care (Pleck, 1983). In a recent study of 1,565 couples, Berardo, Shehan and Leslie (1987) reported that in dual-career, dual-earner, and single-earner couples, wives spent considerably more hours doing housework than husbands and performed 79 percent of the tasks. Furthermore, dual-career couples were no more egalitarian than others in terms of their allocation of time to housework.

The relationship between occupation and work restructuring for both men and women is a very important finding of the study. The causal variable seems to be flexibility and control over one's workday. Occupations in which individuals schedule their own time, are more amenable to work restructuring. Law, psychotherapy, advanced education, medicine are all occupations where people can work as individual contractors with clients. Perhaps being used to setting up one's own daily schedule helps people develop skills for avoiding weekends, evenings, travel, or reinforces norms for avoiding work that requires extra hours.

We think the reasons that men in the study who were restructuring their work reported they were coping poorly, while women who were restructuring reported they were coping well, have much to do with reference groups and violations of sex-role stereotypes. Women who are

working in a demanding professional occupation and managing a family are "super women." Their lives may be characterized as accommodating to family and developing consistently, if slowly at work, (Bailyn, 1977). Still, there is social support from children, spouses, and extended family for managing both work and family and there may be support from supervisors and their employing organizations.

There is probably less social support for men trying to do the same thing. At work, male colleagues are seldom supportive of such activities and at home the man is only doing his share. The man has no cheering section for restructuring work to accommodate family.

Furthermore, men who are actively restructuring work in order to accommodate family are also violating traditional sex-role stereotypes. When a man's sense of self-efficacy is linked to carrying out traditional sex roles, and he violates them through participating in "feminine" household tasks, prior research has shown that his self-esteem suffers (Keith and Schafer, 1980). So, the threat to self-esteem and lack of reference group might explain the relationship between coping and restructuring found among men in this study.

We speculate that many of the women in the sample who were restructuring work in order to accommodate family had made some conscious choices. They wanted careers, but they wanted families, too, so they were willing to make accommodations between the demands of work and family by restructuring work. The results suggest these women were comfortable with their lifestyle.

The men, for the most part, seemed not yet to have made that psychological choice. They may be committed to an egalitarian marriage,

and actually be taking responsibility at home, especially with children. But, the fact that they were coping poorly suggests to us that they had not made a stable and comfortable accommodation between work and family responsibilities.

The relationship between his labor economic conditions and her restructuring is another factor that indicates that work and family conditions do not affect men and women's work restructuring equally. There was no comparable relationship between her labor economic conditions and his restructuring. Among the couples studied here, even though men and women held equal status jobs, the men were earning twice as much as their wives, and so were economically dominant. The finding that women were restructuring in response to their husbands' labor economic conditions, reflects economic reality for these couples. It may also reflect a psychological reality. Previous research on dual-career couples has found that man's career is still preeminent, particularly among couples in which the husband was power-oriented (Gilbert, 1985).

While the men's restructuring did not relate to the economic conditions of their wives employment, it did relate to their psychological needs. The bivariate correlations showed that he was restructuring more when she was coping poorly, and when she was early in her career. The two-stage results showed that he was doing more restructuring when she was psychologically involved with her work. Given the relatively low financial power of the women in this study, these results do not indicate rational, economic reasoning. Indeed, they emphasize the importance of studying dual-earner couples as part of a work-family system where economic reality gives way to psychological considerations.

In general, the relationships found in this study were much more complex than was hypothesized. Several defy interpretation. Why should women who are doing little restructuring be more psychologically involved with their families than those who are restructuring? Why did organizational culture not predict restructuring, except in what seems to be the wrong direction? (Men were restructuring when their wives were in low conformity structures, not high conformity structures.) Why does paid help predict more restructuring on the part of men, instead of less on the part of both men and women? These results may reflect the systemic and dynamic nature of the family or they may be idiosyncratic of this sample.

To be sure the sample is quite peculiar because of the means of selection and the high level of self-selection, some of which occurred without seeing the questionnaire and some after seeing it. The significant causal relationships found in this study are not results to be generalized from, as it is impossible to know what population the sample represents. Their importance lies in the verification of the variables that are associated with work restructuring, not in the confirmation of causal relationships.

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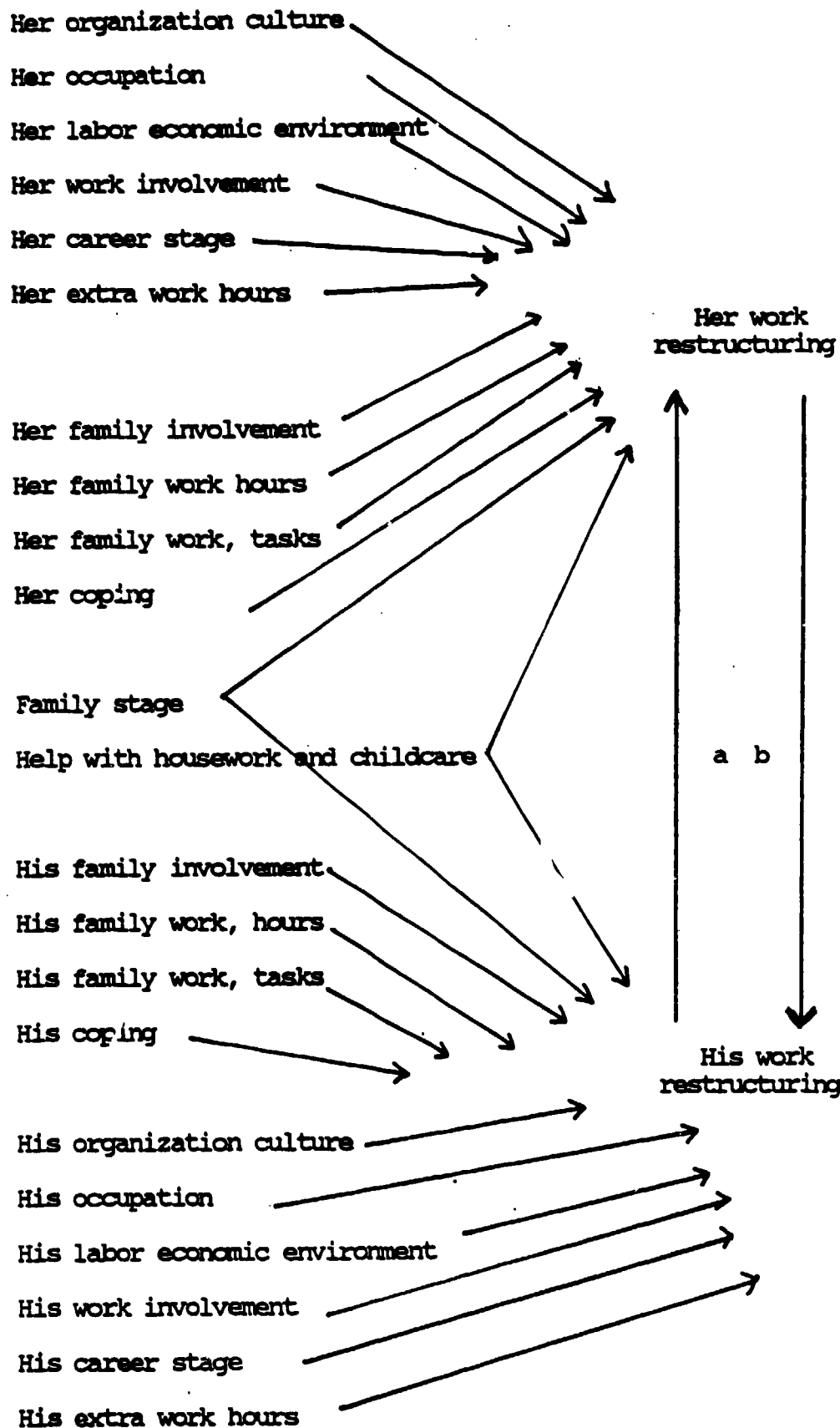


Figure 1. Factors affecting the restructuring of work in order to accommodate family.

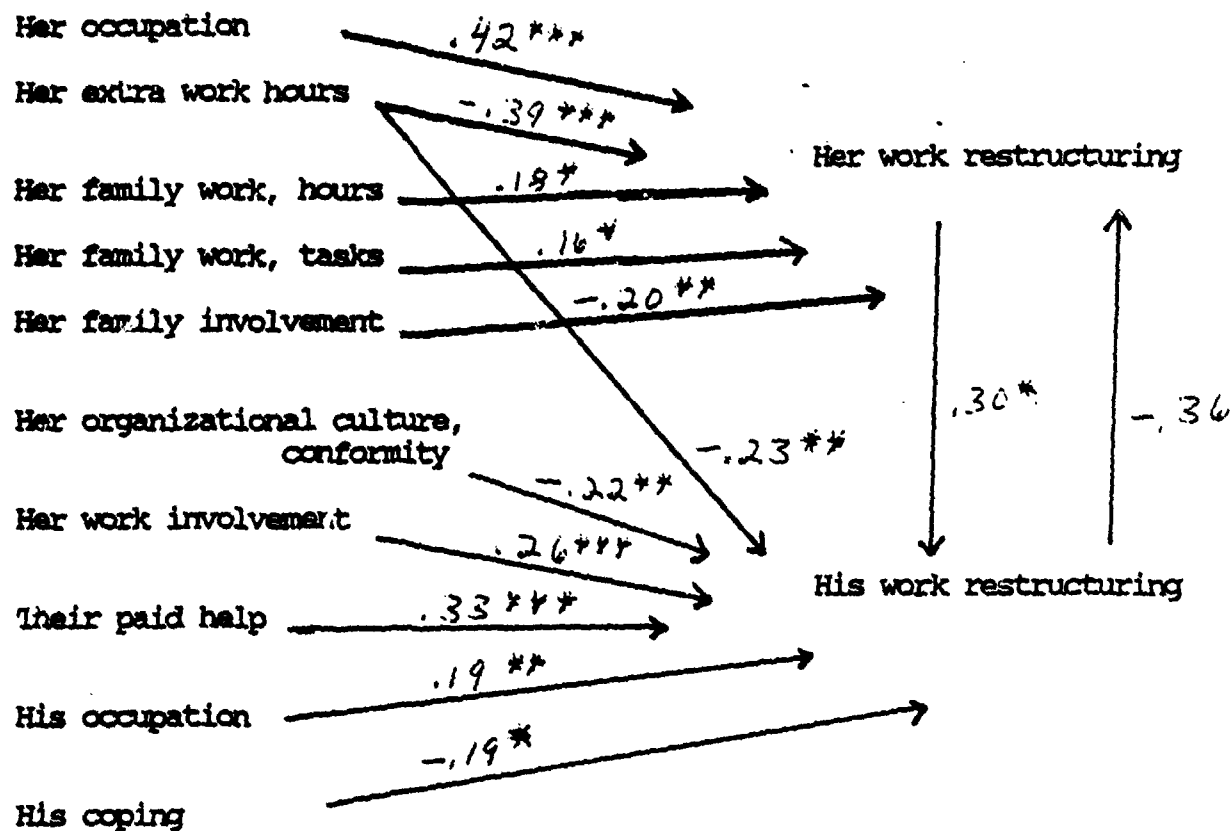


Figure 2. Results of two stage least squares analysis of dual earner couples' work restructuring.

\*  $p \leq .10$   
 \*\*  $p \leq .05$   
 \*\*\*  $p \leq .01$

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.

Characteristic	<u>Men</u>		<u>Women</u>		t
	M	Sd	M	Sd	
Age	37.0	5.6	35.4	4.9	2.59**
Years married	10.7	6.3	10.8	6.3	
Years in community	7.5	5.8	7.5	5.4	
Hours sleep	7.2	.8	7.4	.7	
Years occupation	10.8	5.7	7.8	5.5	3.73**
No. of companies	2.7	1.6	2.5	1.6	
Yrs. present company	6.3	4.8	4.9	4.0	2.33*
Salary	74,247.43	60,473.13	31,612.25	21,664.56	6.53**
Work hours	9.2	1.7	7.9	3.0	3.61**
No. of children	1.7	.9	1.7	.9	
					2
	Mode	%	Mode	%	
Education	Professional	44	Professional	46	
Race	White	95	White	99	
Occupation	Law	29	Law	39	
Career stage	Advancing	32	Getting estab.	33	20.16**
Family stage	13 mo.-3 yr.	38	13 mo.-3 yr.	36	

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, ranges and coefficient alphas for variables in the work restructuring model.

Variable <sup>a</sup>	His		Her	
	M	Sd	M	Sd
Work restructuring	6.97	4.09	9.82	4.98
Culture				
Humanistic	22.46	5.84	21.84	6.55
Competitive	12.42	3.75	12.59	4.38
Conformity	13.26	3.70	13.56	4.20
Labor economic environment	7.56	3.00	8.12	3.41
Work involvement	8.86	2.26	8.07	2.18
Extra work hours	15.20	10.70	10.56	2.25
Family involvement	40.40	5.33	40.40	4.94
Family work, hours	18.96	12.71	36.68	23.31
Family work, tasks	64.21	24.25	89.90	34.67
Coping	15.71	2.42	15.86	11.34
Help with housework & child care	4.01	3.19	-	-
Travel	17.60	32.56	-	-

<sup>a</sup> Variables scored so that a high score indicates more; well. Labor economic environment, high score indicates a hard-to-replace job.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Work Restructuring by Occupation.

<u>Occupation/Role</u>	<u>Law</u>			<u>Accounting</u>			<u>Management</u>			<u>Professional</u>			<u>Other</u>		
	M	Sd	N	M	Sd	N	M	Sd	N	M	Sd	N	M	Sd	N
<b>Men's Occupations</b>															
Husbands' restructuring	7.62	3.86	29	7.15	4.08	13	5.42	4.19	30	9.72	2.55	9	6.60	4.40	15
Wives' restructuring	9.27	4.86	29	9.30	1.78	13	9.99	5.27	30	12.48	3.56	9	9.48	5.68	15
<b>Women's occupations</b>															
Wives' restructuring	11.66	4.27	39	8.96	5.86	8	7.94	4.79	22	9.96	5.00	9	8.41	5.25	17
Husbands' restructuring	8.41	4.02	39	6.75	3.35	8	5.91	3.36	22	6.53	4.83	9	5.63	4.47	17

Table 4

Bivariate Correlations between Predictor Variables  
and Work Restructuring.

<u>Variables</u>	<u>His Restructuring</u>	<u>Her Restructuring</u>
His humanistic culture	-.09	-.15
His competitive culture	-.13	-.16
His conformity culture	-.12	-.05
His occupation	.28**	.04
His labor economic environment	-.08	.25**
His work involvement	-.09	.02
His career stage	-.27**	-.07
His extra work hours	-.12	-.10
His family involvement	.08	-.09
His family work hours	.10	.06
His family work, tasks	.20*	-.01
His coping	-.38**	-.12
Their family stage	-.12	-.21*
Their help with housework & childcare	.23*	-.12
Her humanistic culture	-.06	.04
Her competitive culture	-.05	-.13
Her conformity culture	-.21*	-.07
Her occupation	.30**	.33**
Her labor economic environment	-.18*	-.05
Her work involvement	.14	-.18*
Her career stage	-.23*	-.15
Her extra work hours	-.29**	-.36**
Her family involvement	-.11	-.06
Her family work hours	-.02	.25**
Her family work, tasks	.08	.26*
Her coping	-.19*	-.03
His travel	.11	.19*
Her restructuring	.18*	-
His restructuring	-	.18*

\*p .05  
 \*\*p .01